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homemakers' chat

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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE

FRIDAY, October 17, 1941

SUBJECT: "MORE MILK." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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What I have to say today concerns one of our headline foods--milk--the cornerstone of a good diet for child or grownup.

Milk has been making more headlines than usual in the past month--as maybe you've noticed. Secretary Claude R. Wickard, when he announced his production goals for 1942 for this country, put milk at the very top of the list. We need more milk, he said--more milk for this country, and more milk to send to Britain.

But let me quote you the exact words of the Secretary of Agriculture. He said--

"Of all the farm commodities.....the most urgent need is for more milk. We need to consume more dairy products in this country for improved health and strength. And the British will need tremendous quantities of cheese, evaporated milk, and dried skim milk. To reach the production goal for milk for 1942 the greatest effort will be required in dairying."

Of course, the real reason behind this need for milk, is the fact that milk is such a valuable food. Nutrition experts tell us that milk is a good sound foundation on which to build family meals. For packed into that quart of milk you buy or get from your own accommodating cow are a lot of necessary food values--food values that you'd have a hard time getting anywhere else for the same amount of money.

Furthermore, milk in the more concentrated forms--cheese, evaporated milk or dried milk--has another advantage. It is easy to ship and handle. So we can

deliver good solid nourishment to Britain in small packages. Or we ourselves can buy it most inexpensively in similar small packages.

The story of the food value of milk is one that never grows old to nutrition experts. Here are some of the reasons milk rates so high, according to home economists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Milk was one of the first members of the list of protective foods. As you know, this list is made up of foods that are especially important because they provide the food values we need if our diets are to come up above the safety line for good nutrition.

Milk is counted a protective food for many reasons. Chiefly, it is in the gold star class because it is a good source of calcium, of high-quality protein, of vitamin A, and of riboflavin. Also, for good measure, it has some vitamin B₁ and some vitamin D. Every one of these food values is necessary for good nutrition.

One of the most important of these food values is calcium. Everyone needs to get calcium in his meals, and milk is an easy, inexpensive way to supply it. Children need more calcium than grownups because they are using it more rapidly to build their bones and form their teeth. That's the main reason children need more milk than grownups.

But although adults don't need as much milk as children, they need some every day. Probably you've noticed that a lot of grownups seem to consider milk just a pleasant beverage that they can take or leave alone. They often neglect milk simply because they don't understand that it is especially important to them.

Some of them neglect milk because they have the mistaken notion that it is fattening. Milk really is not a fattening food--but let's quote the home economist on this. They say--

"Foods are classified as fattening or non-fattening according to the calories

they contain. In proportion to its other food values, milk has comparatively few calories--about 170 to a glass. Cutting down on milk and other protective foods is one of the reasons for the loss of vitality and lowered resistance to disease that accompanies certain efforts to keep from getting fat or to reduce."

But so much for the story of milk food value. Now, I'd like to pass on to you some recommendations as to how much milk a person needs every day.

The Bureau of Home Economics of the U. S. Department of Agriculture recently worked out master diet plans to meet the new national yardstick for good nutrition. They worked out these plans at different levels of cost. But no matter how much or how little money there was for food, milk was emphasized in every diet.

Here's what they recommend for a low-cost diet.

If there are children in the family, each one gets from 3 to 4 cups of milk every day. Grownups get 2 to 3 cups. Expectant mothers get about 1 quart, and nursing mothers 1-1/2 quarts. When there is more money to spend for food, the home economists recommend more milk both for children and for adults.

For convenience, these milk recommendations are given in terms of whole fresh milk. But smart homemakers make use of milk in other forms both for variety and economy. Cheese, skim milk, evaporated, or dry milk are often economical sources of the same food values that you get in whole fresh milk.

Here's a last tip about milk from Dr. Hazel K. Stiebeling, food economist of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. She says:

"Make use of milk below the creamline--especially if your food money is limited. Not only could we profit by producing more milk in this country--but it would be to our advantage to use the milk we have more efficiently. One way to use milk more efficiently is by not letting skim milk go to waste. Skim milk contains all the important milk solids except fat and vitamin A. It can be used for part or all of the milk quota. But if skim milk replaces whole, another source of fat and vitamin A must be provided in the diet."

That's all for today.

